

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **10/519,672**
Amendment filed March 15, 2007
Reply to OA dated November 20, 2006

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A pipe coupling comprising a tubular body for a pipe to be inserted in through a rear end thereof, a front and a back ring to be fitted around the pipe projecting from the rear end of the body, and a cap nut for tightening up the front and back rings to fix the pipe to the body, the pipe coupling being characterized in that the back ring is made of an alloy comprising, in % by weight, 0.001 to 0.01% of C, up to 5% of Si, up to 2% of Mn, up to 0.03% of P, up to 100 ppm of S, up to 50 ppm of O, 18 to 25% of Cr, 15 to 25% of Ni, 4.5 to 7.0% of Mo, 0.5 to 3.0% of Cu, 0.1 to 0.3% of N, and the balance substantially Fe and other inevitable impurities, wherein the back ring is not subjected to a heat treatment, such as carburization or nitriding, and the pipe coupling increases in the order of the pipe < the front ring < the back ring in Vickers hardness and wherein the pipe is 150 to 200 in Vickers hardness, the front ring is 250 to 300 in Vickers hardness, and the back ring made of said alloy is 350 to 400 in Vickers hardness.

Claim 2 (Canceled)